

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph on page 10, lines 24-34, with the following amended paragraph:

[[The]] While the elongation process that shortens the diameter of the glass base material is performed by keeping the mentioned state[.] ~~However except during a first phase of heating where the movable headstock is not moved,~~ it is not necessary to hold a midway part of the glass base material 1 except during a first phase of heating where the movable headstock is not moved because tensile stress is exerted in the lateral direction and so the possibility that the glass base material 1 hangs down is low. With this in view, it is preferable to move the midway holding device 8a at the left side to the vicinity of the fixed rotation stand 6, and the midway holding device 8b at the right side to the vicinity of the movable headstock 7. This arrangement is preferable also because the midway holding devices tend to be in the way of the burner 4 while it is being operated, and sometimes breaks due to the radiation heat from the glass base material 1 after being processed.